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**ACT**  
**OF**  
**INCORPORATION**  
**AND**  
**STATED RULES**

**OF THE**  
**SOCIETY OF THE UNITED BRETHREN**

*FOR PROPAGATING THE GOSPEL*

**AMONG**  
**THE HEATHEN.**

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*PHILADELPHIA:*

Printed by CONRAD ZENTLER, No. 104, North Second Street.

1825.





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EXCERPTS

STATED RULES

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## AN ACT

*To incorporate the Society for propagating the Gospel among the Heathen, formed by Members of the Episcopal Church of the United Brethren or Unitas Fratrum.*

*Section 1st.* WHEREAS it has been represented to this House by the Reverend John Ettwein, one of the Bishops of the Church called Unitas Fratrum or United Brethren, and the Reverend John Meder, Pastor in Ordinary of the said Church in the City of Philadelphia, that since the year of our Lord One thousand seven hundred and forty, when the said Church began to make settlements in America, the principal aim of their Members, coming over from Europe, was, to carry the glorious truths of the Gospel to the Indians here; that they have without intermission continued their labours among the Indians, and, notwithstanding the increase of expenses and other difficulties, are resolved to pursue and support this commendable work, and for this purpose have formed a Society for propagating the Gospel among the Heathen, and entered into certain Rules of Association, (a copy whereof they have subjoined to their petition,) and prayed to incorporate the said Society :



*And whereas*, the propagation of the Gospel among the Indians of America, is of great importance to the citizens of this and other the United States, and may, by the blessing of God, be conducive to the peace and security of the inhabitants and settlers of our frontiers, and by living examples of the Missionaries and the converts, the Savages may be induced to turn their minds to the Christian religion, industry, and social life with the citizens of the United States :

*And whereas*, this House is disposed to exercise the powers vested in the Legislature of the Commonwealth, for the encouragement of all pious and charitable purposes :

*Section 2d. Be it therefore enacted, and it is hereby enacted by the Representatives of the Freemen of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania in General Assembly met, and by the Authority of the same*, That the Reverend John Ettwein, Bishop; Frederick William von Marshall, gentleman; the Reverend Andrew Hübner and Paul Münster; Hans Christian von Schweinitz, gentleman; the Reverend David Zeisberger, Junior, John August Klingsohr, Jeremiah Denke, Charles Gotthold Reichel, Daniel Köhler, Christian Benzien and Godfrey Brezel, the present Directors;—The Reverend Bernhard Adam Grube, Frederick Peter, Senior, and Jacob Van Vleck, the present Assistant Directors of the said Society;—The Reverend John Herbst, John Meder, Francis



Böhler, James Birkby, Lewis Böhler and Abraham Reincke and others, the Ministers in the different Brethren's Congregations, and their successors, and all other members of said Society, who have and hereafter shall subscribe the Rules of the said Society, be, and they are hereby made, declared and constituted, to be a corporation and body politic and corporate in law and in fact, to have continuance for ever, by the name, style and title of “ *The Society of the United Brethren for propagating the Gospel among the Heathen.*”

Section 3d. *And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the said corporation and their successors, by the name, style and title aforesaid, shall for ever hereafter be persons able and capable in law to purchase, have, receive, take, hold and enjoy in fee simple or of less estate or estates, any lands, tenements, rents, annuities, liberties, franchises and other hereditaments by the gift, grant, bargain, sale, alienation, enfeoffment, release, confirmation or devise of any person or persons, bodies politic and corporate, capable and able to make the same. *And further,* that the said corporation and their successors may take and receive any sum or sums of money and portion of goods and chattels, that have been or hereafter shall be given or bequeathed to them or the said Society, by any person or persons, bodies politic or corporate, able and capable to make a bequest or gift thereof: *Provided,* that no misno-



mer of the said corporation and their successors, shall defeat or annul any gift, grant, devise or bequest to the said corporation, if the intent of the owner shall sufficiently appear upon the face of the gift, testament or other writing, whereby any estate or interest was intended to pass to the said corporation, nor shall any non-user of the rights, liberties, privileges and authorities or any of them hereby granted to the said corporation create or cause a forfeiture thereof.

*Section 4th. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That all donations and contributions, rents, interests and profits arising from the real and personal estate of the aforesaid corporation, shall by the said Directors and their successors from time to time be applied and laid out for the maintenance and support of their Missionaries and their Assistants, for building and supporting places of public worship and schools, providing books for the better educating, instructing and civilizing the children of the converts and others, among the nations who shall be desirous to commit their youths to the care and instruction of the said Missionaries, and for such other pious and charitable uses, as are conformable to the true design and intent of the said Society.

*Section 5th. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the said corporation and their successors shall not by deed or otherwise,



grant, alien, convey or otherwise dispose of any part or parcel of the real estate in the said corporation, vested or to be vested, or change, or incumber the same to any person or persons whatsoever, except by and with the consent of a majority of the regular contributing members of the said Society, convened for that purpose.

*Section 6th. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the said Directors and Assistant Directors, and their successors, or a majority of them, shall and may from time to time convene the members of the said Society, to make rules, by-laws and ordinances, and to transact every thing requisite for the good government and support of the affairs of the said Society, agreeable to their stated rules: *Provided always,* that the said rules, by-laws and ordinances, or any of them, be not repugnant to the laws and statutes in force within this Commonwealth.

*Section 7th. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the said Society and their successors, shall have full power and authority to make, have and use one common seal, with such device and inscription as they shall think proper, and the same to break, alter and renew at their pleasure.

*Section 8th. And be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid,* That the said corporation and their successors, by the name, style and title aforesaid, shall be able and capable in law, to sue



and be sued, plead and be impleaded, in any court or courts, before any judge or judges, justice or justices, in all and all manner of suits, complaints, causes, matters and demands of whatsoever kind, nature or form they may be, and all and every other matter and thing therein to do, in as full and effectual a manner, as any other person or persons, bodies politic or corporate in this Commonwealth in the like cases may or can do.

*Section 9th. Provided also, and it is further enacted by the authority aforesaid, That the clear yearly value or income of the messuages, houses, lands, tenements, rents, annuities, or other hereditaments and real estate of the said corporation, shall not exceed the sum of two thousand pounds, lawful money of the State of Pennsylvania, to be taken and esteemed, exclusive of the monies arising from the contributions of the actual members, and donations of the honorary members or other friends to the said institution.*

*Signed by order of the House,*

THOMAS MIFFLIN, *Speaker.*

Enacted into a law, at Philadelphia, on Wednesday, the twenty-seventh day of February, in the year of our Lord One thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight.

PETER ZACHARY LLOYD,  
*Clerk of the General Assembly.*



# STATED RULES

OF THE

SOCIETY OF THE UNITED BRETHREN

FOR

*PROPAGATING THE GOSPEL*

AMONG

THE HEATHEN.

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## ARTICLE I.

**T**HIS Society shall have its fixed seat at Bethlehem, in Northampton County, in the State of Pennsylvania, where the Board of Directors will meet, and the stated general meetings shall be held.

## ARTICLE II.

All Bishops, Presbyters and Deacons of the Brethren's Church, residing in the United States, and all such Brethren as are actual members of the Elders' Conferences in the Brethren's Congregations in this country, are, by virtue of their office and character, members of this Society.

Others may be received as members, as hereinafter directed.



### ARTICLE III.

Only such members of the Society who are members of the Brethren's Church, shall have a seat and vote in the Society, and are considered as actual members.

Besides these, the Society may receive persons of other churches and denominations, who are friends and well-wishers to the furtherance of the Gospel among the heathen, as honorary members; who shall be admitted to the general meetings, but have no vote in the deliberations of the Society.

### ARTICLE IV.

As the true and only design of the Society is, to assist such Missionaries and their Assistants, who from time to time are sent by the Directors of the Brethren's Missions, to preach the Gospel to the heathen, we will with pleasure further this blessed work, by all the means in our power, and not confine our assistance to mere stated charities and contributions.

### ARTICLE V.

For constant Directors of the Society, we choose, constitute and appoint those Brethren,



who are appointed to superintend the concerns of the Brethren's Congregations in North America, and their successors in office.

Out of the number of said Directors, a President and a Vice-President shall annually be elected in the general meeting of the Society. Three Assistant Directors, one Secretary, one Treasurer, and three Auditors, shall likewise annually be elected in the same general meeting, out of the number of the actual members of the Society.

The said Directors, Assistant Directors, Secretary and Treasurer shall constitute the Board of Directors.

## ARTICLE VI.

The Treasurer shall receive and account for all moneys belonging to the Society, and keep proper accounts in books provided for that purpose. An account of his receipts and disbursements, after having been duly audited, and the vouchers examined by the Auditors, shall annually be laid before the Society, in the said general meeting.

## ARTICLE VII.

The Directors shall, at the annual meeting, communicate to the members of the Society, ac-



counts of the state and progress of the missions, and a full report of their proceedings.

### ARTICLE VIII.

The Directors shall, at least once every year, appoint a general meeting of the Society. But the President, with the concurrence of four of the Directors, may call special meetings, if the concerns of the Society shall require it.

### ARTICLE IX.

It is unalterably decreed, that all donations and bequests to the Society, and all its possessions, effects and property whatsoever and wheresoever, shall at all times and forever be and remain appropriated, secured, made use of, and expended, for and to the support and benefit of the missions of the Brethren's Church among the heathen, and to no other use or purpose whatsoever.

And all the members of the Society, for themselves and their heirs, hereby expressly renounce all and every claim to the property of the Society, and promise, that if any of the Society's possessions or effects whatsoever shall be intrusted to their hands, or if their names, or the name of any



of them shall be used in trust for the Society, they will faithfully and without reserve perform and fulfil, at all times and in all cases, such orders and directions respecting the property thus intrusted to them or any of them, as aforesaid, as the Society by the Directors shall think proper to give.

## ARTICLE X.

As we have no other view or aim but the furtherance and propagation of the knowledge of Jesus Christ among the poor benighted heathen, and esteem it a high privilege to support that praiseworthy work to the best of our abilities, being constrained to it by the love of Christ,—all the Directors, Assistant Directors, and officers of the Society, renounce for ever all demands and claims for salaries or compensations for their services. *Provided*, that all contingent expenses, which shall be necessarily incurred by the Directors, Assistant Directors and officers aforesaid, or any of them, shall be defrayed by the Society; and that the Directors be authorized to allow a reasonable compensation to such agents and officers, as they shall or may deem expedient to appoint.



## ARTICLE XI.

Application for membership shall be made to the Board of Directors. If in their opinion the objects of the Society may be promoted by the admittance of the applicants, the Directors shall propose them for admittance to the Society, at the next general meeting. The votes of a majority of the voting members present, shall be necessary for such admission.

## ARTICLE XII.

As every member is at liberty to withdraw from the Society, the Society also reserves to itself the right of excluding any member, whenever it shall be found necessary : *Provided*, that no such exclusion shall take place, unless by a previous vote of the Directors, and the consent of two-thirds of the voting members present at a general meeting. All persons who have been excluded in manner aforesaid, or who by separation from the Brethren's Church have ceased to be members of the Society, may be re-admitted as members, by a majority of the votes of the members at a general meeting.



### ARTICLE XIII.

A printed copy of the Act of Incorporation, together with the Stated Rules of the Society, shall be delivered to each new member, as soon as he shall have subscribed his name to the Stated Rules, in a book kept for the purpose.

### ARTICLE XIV.

The Society can in future agree upon new articles and rules, if circumstances require it : *Provided*, that the same be not contrary to the object of these present articles, and the well-being of the Society.

### ARTICLE XV.

These articles hereby agreed upon and accepted, can only be altered after mature deliberation, and the approbation of two-thirds of the members present at a general meeting; and if any alteration is made, it shall in no wise be contrary to the Constitution of the Brethren's Church, and the instructions for the Missionaries of the Brethren among the heathen. And that each such intended alteration may be maturely examined by



the Directors and every voting member, it shall be proposed in a general meeting, and in the next general meeting of the Society, it shall be considered and brought to a determination.









